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INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1

COUNTRY USSR (Magadan Oblast)

REPORT NO. [redacted] 25X1

SUBJECT The Lazo Cassiterite Mine

DATE DISTR. 8 JUNE 55

NO. OF PAGES 8

DATE OF INFO. [redacted]

REQUIREMENT [redacted] 25X1

PLACE ACQUIRED [redacted]

REFERENCES [redacted] 25X1

DATE ACQUIRED This is UNEVALUATED Information

SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

[redacted]

25X1

CORRECTION

An Information Report with the above heading [redacted] 25X1 was issued on 12 May 1955. On page 1 of the above report, the coordinates (N 62-18, E 151-27) for Pyatilotka should be changed to read (N 63-12, E 152-09).

[redacted] 25X1

S-E-C-R-E-T

[redacted] 25X1

STATE	X	ARMY	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI		AEC					

(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#".)

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Administration

1. The Lazo Cassiterite Mine, located in the Lazo (N 63-13, E 152-10) area, was part of the Upper Seymchan Ore Mining Combine (Verkhniy Seymchanskiy gorno-rudnyy kombinat). Directly subordinate to the Lazo mine were Camp Gulikhari, 22 km northeast of Pyatiletka (N 62-18, E 151-27); the mine at Chapayev, 3 km from the Third Factory; and the Medvedka mine, 11 km from Pyatiletka. The other units under the combine were the Second and Third Concentration Factories, southeast and southwest of Pyatiletka, respectively; and the Pyatiletka Cassiterite Mine, which employed criminal prisoners.

2. There was another organizational arrangement for administering prison camps. In that organization, Camp Lazo was under the Fifth Division (Section) (Pyatoye otdeleniye) of Berlag (Beregovyye lageri), which handled only political prisoners. In addition to Camp Lazo, the Third Factory Camp and Camp Gulikhari were in the Fifth Division. The parallel organization for criminal prisoners was the sixth OLP (Otdeleniye lagpunkt), which was under Yuzlag (Yugo-zapadnyye lageri). To this group belonged Camp Pyatiletka; the Second Factory Camp (cassiterite); Camp 7th Kilometer (Lager shestogo-kilometra), 7 km east of Pyatiletka, where the prisoners worked in the woods; Camp Chapayev; and Camp 13th Kilometer (Lager trinadtsatogo kilometra), 13 km west of Pyatiletka, which was also engaged in lumbering.

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STATE	X	ARMY	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI		AEC		ORREV	X		

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Labor and Wages

3. [redacted] In 1949-1950, a total of approximately 1,500 were employed at the mine. In 1952, only 600 remained. Outside the mine and on some transportation jobs inside the mine, the prisoners worked in two shifts of 12 hours each. Borers and haulers worked in three shifts of eight hours each. In 1952, about 400 prisoners worked inside the mine, and 200 worked outside. Of the latter group, about 100 workers were blacksmiths, mechanics, sorters of ore, and workers on the ventilators, compressors, etc.

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4. Political prisoners received no wages until April 1952, and then half of this pay was withheld by the camp authorities. In addition, there was a deduction of 310 rubles per month for the food and clothing provided by the camp. This amount was the standard deduction in all camps under Berlag. Of the remainder which was owed to the prisoner, 14 percent was deducted as a "liberation fund". Many prisoners received about 90 rubles per month, paid in three installments.

[redacted]

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Operation and Equipment

5. The Lazo Cassiterite Mine was begun in 1935 or 1939 and was being quickly exhausted. Originally, it had nine or ten shafts or sections.[1] About seven sections were abandoned in 1951, and, in 1953, work was carried on in only four sections. The main section was Mine No. 7. (sedmoy shtol), which had an electric train. All the ore was brought to this section for further transport to the Third Factory. There were chutes in the upper mine shafts, and the ore was dumped down; in the lower shafts, the ore was collected from mine drawers (lyuk) and put into mine cars. Depending upon the sections in which the miners worked, the cars were filled by hand-shovels, by a mechanical shovel which picked up the ore and dumped it backwards into the car, or from the mine drawers. The mine cars were pushed by hand onto the mine elevator (kliet), which took them up, one by one, to Mine No. 7. The mine cars all had a one-ton capacity;

[redacted]

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6. Normally, only free workers were allowed to handle the explosive. After the holes were drilled, the ammonal, which was similar to dynamite, was exploded at regular hours, at 0600, 1600, and 2000 hours. After spring 1953, when a group of prisoners was caught manufacturing hand grenades from some dynamite which they had obtained, only soldiers were allowed to handle the explosive in the Lazo mine.[2]

7. The mine was worked all year, day and night. The seasons made no great difference in the operation of the mine. In Mine No. 5, which was 250 m deep, it was cold the year around. Even in the summer, the miners entered it wearing heavy clothing; in winter, the temperature in the mine was -45°C. In Mine No. 7, the main mine, the temperatures went down to -60°C.

[redacted]

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In the lower sections of the mine, there was water which had to be pumped out. Water did not freeze in the pumps when they were working continuously, but the pipes were usually covered with hoar frost. When the pumping stopped for any reason, the pipes had to be melted with steam.

8. The natural cassiterite ore was dark red or brown. When there was cassiterite in the rock, it appeared as small, shining points in the rock. The ore could also be detected by the weight of the rock. A piece of rock the size of a fist weighed three to five kg when there was much ore in it. After the ore was concentrated, cassiterite looked dark blue, almost black. Apparently, cassiterite was very hard, since the borers broke their drill points (pobedit) when drilling the cassiterite ore. The metal content of the ore varied greatly, from eight to 60 percent. The average was between 18 and 25 percent. The ore which contained less than eight percent of metal was dumped near the Third Factory. Occasionally, prisoners were assigned there to pick out some of the better pieces. [redacted] cassiterite was used by the army to make tank armor. 25X1

9. All the energy in the mine was generated by electric power. The drills, however, functioned by compressed air. Also, a hammer (molotok), which weighed 32 kg, was activated by compressed air. For drilling upwards, miners used a special drill called teleskop. This tool was about three meters long and could be extended 2.20 m; in addition, there were special extensions of one, two, or three meters which could be attached to it. In 1952, dust masks (respirator) were given to the face workers (zaboyshchik) and the borers (burilshchik). The mask had woolen pads on the cheeks, and it covered only the nose and mouth. Later, water was added to the drills to keep down the dust. In 1952, a mechanical shovel for loading the cars was introduced in Section 294 of the mine. Much new equipment was brought to the mine; it was of Italian, Czechoslovak, and American origin. There were ventilators in all parts of the mine where work was carried on. The pumps in the mine were of various origins, German, Czechoslovak, and Soviet. One reserve pump had been made in the Orotukan Steel Mill; [redacted] There was a number on every piece of equipment, but the number was meaningless, since it did not refer to the model but only to the worker who had made that particular item. 25X1

Production

10. Production at the Lazo Cassiterite Mine decreased steadily after 1949. At that time, each section (uchastok) had a norm of 300 cubic meters per eight hour shift; nine sections were in operation. By 1952, only Sections Nos. 6 and 7 were in operation. Their output varied between 240 and 360 cubic meters. The individual norm varied a great deal, depending upon where a miner was working. A loader and hauler (otkatchik), 300 m away from the mine, had to fill seven one-ton cars, but there were many irregularities. For example, every prisoner had his own number tags, which he placed on a loaded car. The car went up the elevator and, at the exit, was credited to the man who had loaded it. At the end of the shift, each prisoner's numbers were totaled. Frequently, however, prisoners switched the number tags from a well-loaded car to their own, which was not as full. At other times, they transferred ore by shovel from another car to their own.

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11. In 1949, more than 250 truck loads of ore were moved from the mine to the factory. The old ZIS trucks then in use had a capacity of 1 to 1.5 tons. In 1952-1953, only 60 to 70 trucks were loaded per shift. At this time, however, the ZIS trucks were newer, and each had a capacity of 1.5 to 2 tons. After the death of Stalin, work was cut down, and often only one brigade worked where two had previously been used.

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Prospecting

12. Prospecting for new mining areas went on continuously. There were various derricks (towers) in the Lazo area, which were digging stations for finding new ore deposits. These towers were manned by criminals from the Pyatiletka camp. At the foot of each tower there was a large box with compartments in it. For every meter that the bore went down, a sample was deposited in the box. When the box was full, it was taken to the laboratory in the Third Factory area for analysis. Also, special research brigades made up of criminals were sent to the hills to explore for any kind of metal. Each brigade was composed of 12 men, who received instructions from an engineer. The latter gave them a map and told them where to go. Frequently, a geologist accompanied such a brigade. They brought back samples, which were analyzed in the laboratory. These men were paid two or three times as much as ordinary workers, and they received extra premiums when they were successful.

Health

13. Before the introduction of the dust masks, there had been 120 persons with tuberculosis and silicosis in Camp Lazo. After safety measures were introduced, the incidence of these diseases decreased.

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Personalities

14. Following are personalities connected with the mine:

a. Kupaltsov (fnu): Head of the mine (nachalnik rudnika).

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He went on a vacation in 1952.

b. Chernyakov (fnu): Chief engineer in early 1952.

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c. Petrov (fnu): Chief engineer in 1953.

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d. Tarakanov (fnu): Dispatcher (dispetcher) of section No. 4 until about 1950. He distributed the work in his section.

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e. Feodosov (fnu): Head of underground transports and in charge of sorting ore.

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f. Palchik, Mikhail: Chief of source's brigade,

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g. Gandarakhinov (fnu): A Cossack, became dispatcher after Tarakanov, of

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Security

15. The entire mine was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence about 2.50 m high. The fence had three wires, which were connected by a cross wire. On the outside of the fence, there were boards, about every 20 m, which bore the inscription zap-n (forbidden zone).5 On the inside, about every 50 m, there were dogs tied to a running wire. They were German Shepherd dogs (volk).

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5. See page 7, number 30.

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Legend to Enclosure: Sketch Map of Lazo Cassiterite Mine

1. Entrance to Main Pit No. 7 (sedmoy shtol).
2. Hammer repair station (molotok remont).
3. Bunker 20m x 3 m (height), held 600 tons. This is where the ore went after sorting, for shipment to Third Factory in trucks.
4. Sorter (sortirovka).
5. Bunker where the ore was dumped to go by conveyer belt to the sorter.
6. Endless conveyer (beskonechnyy) to take low grade ore to the dump.
7. Dump (otval). Ore containing six to nine percent cassiterite was dumped there to be used later when the mine was exhausted.
8. Wood construction shop (stroy-tsekh). Mine drawers, walks, and other devices needed in the mine were made there.
9. Office of mine Section No. 1 (uchastok).
10. Mine Pit No. 10 (shtol).
11. Mine Pit No. 4 (shtol).
12. Office and tool depot for Mine No. 4.
13. Mine Pit No. 1.
14. Various exploration borer towers.
15. Office for all the mine sections (uchastok).
16. Mining lamp shop and ventilators. Miners left lamp batteries here for recharging at the end of the shift.
17. Compressed air station.
18. Office of the Lazo mine directorate.
19. Showers.
20. Electrical workshop (elektro-tsekh).
21. Dispensary (ambulatoriya) and mechanical shop (mekh-tsekh).
22. Restaurant for prisoners.
23. Mine Pit No. 2 (shtol).

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24. Forge (kuznitsa).

25. Bunker. Ore from Mine No. 2 was moved there by a windlass (lebedka).

26. Ammonal storage.

27. Watch tower.

28. Guard post at entrance of mine.

29. Barbed wire fence, three strands and some crosswise; height: 2.50 m. Outside there was a ring of powerful arc lamps about every 100 m. Inside there were small sign boards with an inscription: "Forbidden Zone".

30. Sign board. In this mine the inscription was: zap-n. Source could not explain the n. (In Camp Gulikhari, the sign read: za-zon.)[1]

31. Office of 5th Division (Otdeleniye), Berlag, MVD.

32. Garage which serviced the whole of the 5th Division.

33. Storage depot of clothing and food for 5th Division.

34. Camp Lazo:

    a. Dining hall.

    b. 12 barracks (shown in black).

    c. KVCh (cultural-educational division).

    d. Hospital.

    e. Showers.

    f. Solitary confinement barracks (izolyator or kartser).

    g. Camp prison which was also used by 5th Division.

    h. Camp office building.

35. Garrison barracks.

36. Showers for free workers.

37. Prison for free workers.

38. Headquarters of local Communist Party.

39. Office of the Lazo Mine (rudnik Lazo) which was in control of the Lazo Cassiterite Mine and Third Factory.

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40. Club house.

41. School.

42. Wood storage - fuel, wood, and lumber.

43. Dwellings. These houses were in a small vale.

1. Field Comment. In Orotukan (N 62-16, E 151-42), [redacted] the sign read: Zapret Zona.

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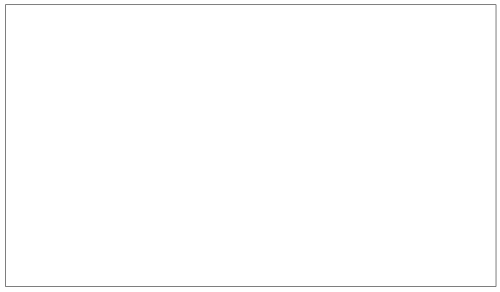

[redacted]

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NW NORTH NE

SECRET

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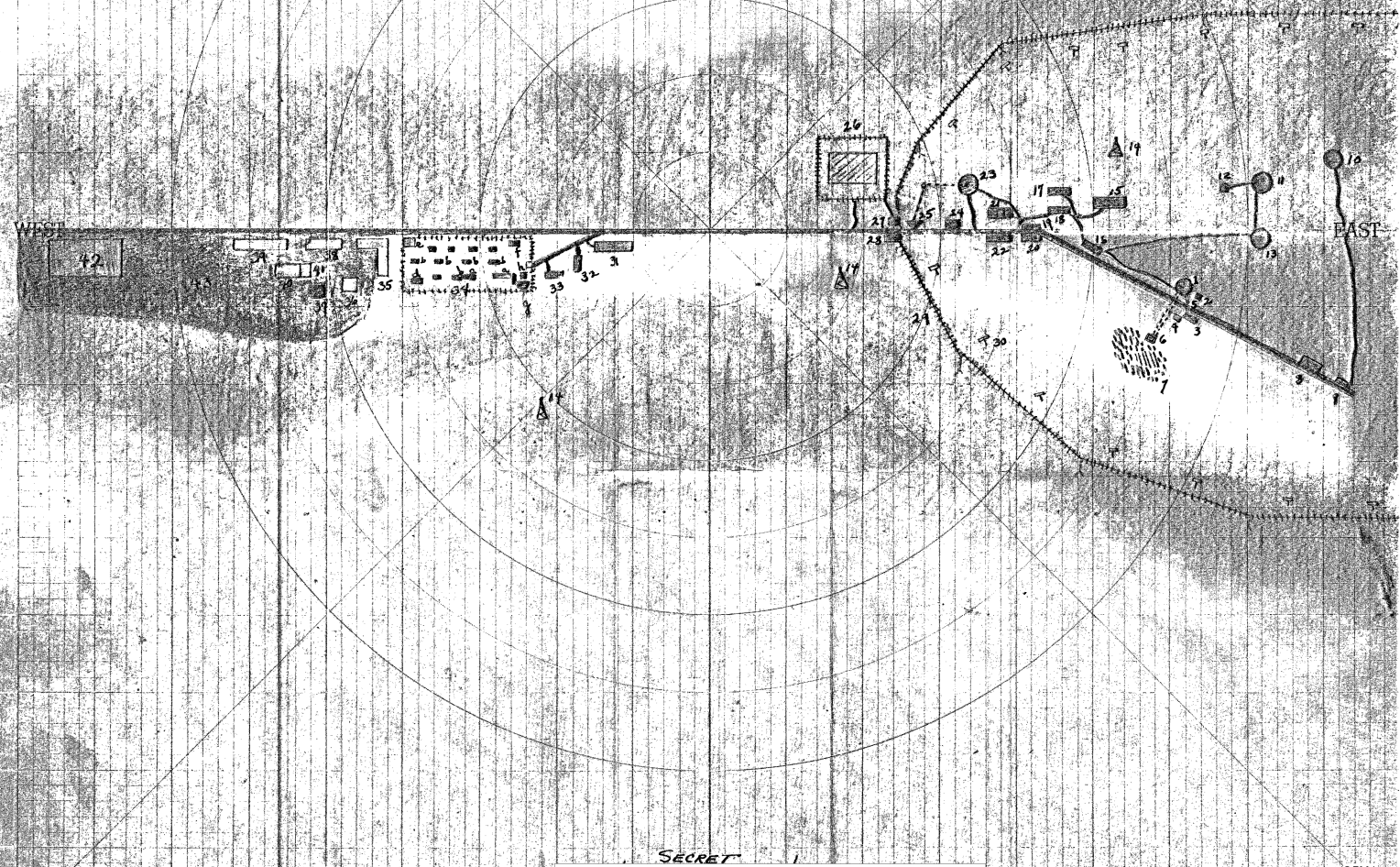
SKETCH MAP OF
LAZO CASSITERITE MINE

Approximate Scale: 1 inch equals 150 m.



SECRET

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SW SOUTH SE

Sketch Map Grid GR1384 6-53

-535-22

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